

# DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education  
Collective Worship  
and  
The Catholic Life of the School



**School:** St Pius X RC Primary School

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**Head Teacher:** Peter Gair

**Chair:** Vivienne Flynn

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> November 2013

**Inspector:** Sharon Melia-Craven

A Report from:  
The Diocese of Middlesbrough Schools' Service  
Section 48 Inspection Team  
50a The Avenue  
Linthorpe  
Middlesbrough TS5 6QT

## INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school. The Inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation. The Inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

### What Inspection Grades mean

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding Catholic school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a Catholic school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	These features, though of adequate quality, require improvement to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate Catholic school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Pius X RC primary School provides an education to children aged 3 to 11 years. The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are 179 pupils on roll excluding Nursery. Currently there are 31 part time Nursery children attending. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high at 63%. There are 91% of pupils are White British background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as a first language is high with 98%.

The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is in line with the national average. The school's deprivation indicator is high at 0.56 compared to the national of 0.24. Two thirds of staff and pupils are baptised Catholics.

**Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll: 179 (52 part time places in Nursery – Currently 32 children)

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: 30

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 66.6%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations: 12%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 0.5%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 21%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 11%

**Teaching Staff:**

Full-time Teachers: 12 (including Headteacher)

Part-time Teachers: 1

Percentage of Catholic Teachers: 67%

**Support Staff:**

Full-time Classroom Support Staff: 9

Part-time Classroom Support Staff: 0

Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff: 22%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 25%

**Percentage of learning time given to R.E:**

FS – Y6 10%

**Parishes served by the School:**

St Pius and St Alphonsus

# 1. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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## MAIN FINDINGS

St Pius X Catholic Primary School is a good school providing effective Catholic education for all of its pupils. The strong relationships apparent in the school are a great strength and contribute significantly to the success of the school which is recognised by the parents, parish priest, other governors and the whole community. The senior leadership team and governors, led by the newly appointed headteacher, and all staff, are committed to the Catholic life of the school, show a commitment to the Church's mission in education and hold spiritual and moral development of pupils as a priority.

Pupils achieve well and enjoy their Religious Education lessons. By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils have made good progress from a low baseline. The Religious Education curriculum is well planned by teachers who are increasingly delivering imaginative and interesting lessons. The many opportunities provided for pupils to benefit from the Catholic life of the school are demonstrated through the responses of the children to questioning during the inspection.

All Pupils respond positively and reverently in Collective Worship which is however mostly adult planned and led. The newly appointed lay chaplaincy co-ordinator is beginning to support some pupils and staff in enabling pupils to take on these roles. Pupils attend class masses in the parish church as well as in school at certain times throughout the year. The parish priest visits the school and supports the school in the delivery of sacramental programmes. Growing links are developing with the parish.

The teaching of Religious Education is mostly good with none being inadequate. Committed teachers and support staff deliver lessons which challenge, interest and inspire pupils who work hard and take pride in their efforts. Support staff significantly contribute to pupil progress, especially for those pupils with specific learning needs. Religious Education is well led by the subject leader who has a strong personal faith who supports and guides colleagues effectively in the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum, especially newly qualified teachers and those who are not Catholic. Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are undertaken with rigour and dedication.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Review the school's Mission Statement
- Secure consistently good or better teaching to raise standards and outcomes by:
  - Greater differentiation of tasks
  - Matching activities more closely to pupils' needs and ability
  - Ensuring learning outcomes and 'I can statements' are at the correct level
  - Developing the consistent use of a marking and feedback policy to enable pupils to improve their work
  - Further developing the accuracy of teachers' assessment of work
- Develop Collective Worship in the school by:
  - Enabling pupils to take responsibility for planning, preparing and leading liturgy
  - Developing the role of the lay chaplaincy co-ordinator
  - Adding pupils to the chaplaincy team
- Enhance leadership and management by:
  - Ensuring that the subject leadership is given the appropriate priority by the Head Teacher and governing body

## 2. PUPILS

### **How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups**

Outcomes for pupils overall are good. In lessons observed pupils were motivated, engaged and interacting with each other and adults with purpose. Pupils are proud of their school, take responsibility and are keen to represent their school.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school are good as they participate with openness and enthusiasm. The school offers many opportunities for pupils to develop creatively, spiritually and morally. Pupils are interested in, and show respect for, the religious belief of others, demonstrating this in discussion of their recent study of Judaism. Their understanding of the key celebrations in the liturgical year is evident in pupils' knowledge of those which take place in school during Advent and Lent. The School Council take their responsibilities seriously and are committed to leading the school's charitable activities locally, nationally and globally.

Standards of attainment in Religious Education are mostly good, despite significantly below average levels of development and attainment in all areas on entry into Foundation Stage. Children make good progress so that by the end of key stage one a large majority of pupils achieved expected levels and by the end of key stage two the majority of pupils achieved level 4 (2012/13). Targets set for this year demonstrate that a large majority of pupils will achieve level 4 in Religious Education. There is a three year trend of improvement. There are no significant gaps in either attainment or progress between different groups of pupils, with the least able being as well supported as the most able are challenged. The subject leader ensures that assessment of work and moderation of levels is undertaken according to diocesan guidelines.

Pupils are keen to do well, enjoy their lessons and say "we work our hardest". They are reflective and inquiring during lessons, having enthusiasm for their tasks as observed in all lessons from Foundation Stage 1 to Year 6. The Sacred Space is used in every classroom to offer all pupils an absorbing opportunity for thought and reflection. Work in books is of a good standard, though opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' feedback in order to improve their work, is not consistent across the school and differentiation of tasks is not always evident. I can statements are used at the start of every topic but pupils are not using the self-assessment column. Learning outcomes are identified on all work but are not levelled.

Pupils reverently participate in collective worship and readily take part in the prayer life of the school which is however, almost always adult led. A thoughtful and reflective class based act of worship was observed which had been planned and prepared by pupils under the guidance of the lay Chaplaincy Co-ordinator. Pupils are not yet involved in planning and preparing liturgy in other classes. A prayer group is led by the school's newly appointed lay Chaplaincy Co-ordinator. The whole school house assembly is led by the Head Boy and Head Girl and is an opportunity for pupils to showcase their talents and achievements.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>

### 3. PROVISION

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#### **How effective the provision is for Catholic Education**

The quality of teaching is mostly good. Where teaching is less than good greater pace is required as well as a clarity and differentiation of task and activities matched to all pupils' needs and abilities. The school's own self-evaluation and lesson observation records confirm this. The majority of teaching engages pupils as observed across the school, from the youngest pupils who knew they were 'waiting for Jesus' birthday' to the oldest pupils who were making links to previous topics and discussing how decisions are informed by belief and values. All teachers, but especially those teachers who are not Catholic or Newly Qualified are ably supported by Religious Education leader.

Pupils are interested in their Religious Education lessons and make good contributions. Some teachers are using resources and technology in an imaginative way to engage pupils and maximise learning. Very good use of Bibles was observed in a key stage 2 class when pupils were demonstrating their ability to locate references. Most teacher knowledge is good; lessons are well planned and contribute to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Teachers are using the Come and See programme to effectively promote pupils' learning in an environment of trust and respect. Where other adults are used to support pupils' learning it is done so effectively, with pupils of all abilities engaging confidently in small groups. Achievement and effort are rewarded through the school's house system and celebrated in the house assembly. Godly Play is used to enhance the Religious Education curriculum. The provision for Religious Education on the timetable meets the Bishop's requirements.

The quality of collective worship provided in the school is not yet good because pupils are not involved in the planning, preparation and leadership of acts of worship in a whole school systematic way. Pupils attend class masses weekly in the parish church and mass is celebrated in school throughout the year.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is good and is made explicit throughout the learning environment which is attractive and well-ordered with quality displays. It makes a positive contribution to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, encouraging pupils to show respect and take responsibility. Sacred spaces in each

classroom are used daily and give a positive opportunity for pupils to focus on the Catholic life of the school. As the mission statement declares, the school is committed to valuing each child and enabling them to grow and learn. All members of staff strive to uphold the mission. Pastoral support is enhanced through the work of the Child and Family Support Officer who provides a 'holistic approach and sanctuary' for many families. The newly appointed lay chaplaincy co-ordinator is keen to develop her role in the school and is being proactive in supporting staff and pupils.

Parents are keen to affirm that the school is a welcoming place in which they feel confident in approaching all staff and discussing any problems or issues which are quickly addressed when necessary. They report that they are regularly informed about the Catholic life of the school, that their children have a 'zest for learning' and are happy to come to school which they say is a 'jewel' in the community. Parents receive the 'Wednesday Word' weekly to extend the Catholic life of the school into the family. The use of the weekly 'Statements to Live By' enables pupils to recognise and understand their place in the community. Pupils are proud of their school and show a commitment to their community through their support of charitable organisations such as Zoe's Place, Cancer Research and CAFOD.

• The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	<b>2</b>
• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	<b>3</b>
• The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school	<b>2</b>

## 4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

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### How effective leaders, managers and governors are in developing the Catholic life of the school

The leadership, management and governance of the school are good overall. After a period of turmoil, the senior leadership of the school is settled. With the appointment of the new Head Teacher the school has great capacity to improve further. Relationships are strength of the school and built upon to foster an ethos of trust and respect. Leaders, managers and governors are committed to the school and its role in the church's mission in education. They and all staff are dedicated to the work of the school and its Catholic life within the community and strive to enhance the Spiritual and Moral development of all pupils.

The leadership is keen to gather the views of parents through questionnaires. Parents are forthcoming with their views, for example: "Great school which two of my children attend kept well informed in all areas of my child's learning".

The Catholic life of the school is included in the Religious education Action Plan which features prominently in the School Development plan and is reported on termly by the Head teacher to the Governing Body. A planned review of the school's mission statement will consolidate the improvements that have been made and lead to a shared understanding of them by all in the school community. A recent development has been the inclusion of a Religious Education focus in the Performance Management of leading staff. There is a wide range of networking initiatives with the local cluster of Catholic schools which provide enrichment and faith development opportunities for pupils and staff.

The Religious Education subject leader is well informed by current developments and is able to provide direction, guidance and support for classroom staff. However, the religious Education leader also has responsibility for another major core subject which has great demands on her time and means she is very stretched to perform all her functions well. Monitoring of Religious Education includes work celebration, planning scrutiny, lesson observations and display evaluations. A tracking system is in place to ensure that all pupils are making good progress in Religious Education.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How well leaders, managers and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school, including collective worship, and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils</li></ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How well leaders, managers and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils</li></ul>	<b>2</b>